

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

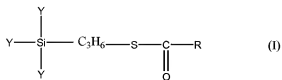
This Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

Please cancel claims 4 and 5 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Cancelled)

6. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition comprising 100 parts by weight of a rubber component containing natural rubber in an amount of 10% by weight or more and styrene-butadiene copolymer rubber in an amount of 20% by weight or more and 2 to 100 parts by weight of a surface-treated silica treated, on its surface, in advance, with a silane coupling agent X represented by the formula (I)



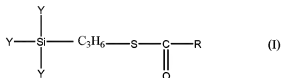
wherein Y independently indicates a methoxy, ethoxy, propoxy, isopropoxy, butoxy, isobutoxy or acetoxy group, R indicates a C₁ to C₁₈ hydrocarbon group selected from a linear, cyclic or branched alkyl group, alkenyl group, aryl group and aralkyl group,

wherein the silica treated, on its surface, with the silane coupling agent X has a bulk density retention rate of 50 to 150% and wherein the amount of surface treatment of the silica

with the silane coupling agent X satisfies the relationship:

$$1 \leq (\text{the weight of silane coupling agent X} / \text{the weight of silica before treatment}) \times 100 \leq 25.$$

7. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition for a studless tire comprising 100 parts by weight of a diene-based rubber containing 30 to 80 parts by weight of natural rubber and 70 to 20 parts by weight of a polybutadiene rubber and 2 to 30 parts by weight of the surface-treated silica, on its surface, in advance, with a silane coupling agent X represented by the formula (I)



wherein Y independently indicates a methoxy, ethoxy, propoxy, isopropoxy, butoxy, isobutoxy or acetoxy group, R indicates a C₁ to C₁₈ hydrocarbon group selected from a linear, cyclic or branched alkyl group, alkenyl group, aryl group and aralkyl group,

wherein the silica treated, on its surface, with the silane coupling agent X has a bulk density retention rate of 50 to 150% and wherein the amount of surface treatment of the silica with the silane coupling agent X satisfies the relationship:

$$1 \leq (\text{the weight of silane coupling agent X} / \text{the weight of silica before treatment}) \times 100 \leq 25.$$

8. (Original) A rubber composition for a studless tire as claimed in claim 7, wherein the diene-based rubber has an average glass transition temperature of -55°C or less.

9. (Cancelled)